Unearthing of Indo-Greek settlement

775. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

'(a) whether it is a fact that 2000 year old Indo-Greek settlement was unearthed while the laying of pipeline of Sardar Sarovar Project;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there existed a riverine port equivalent of a busy modern Indian port like Kandia which flourished nearly 2000 years ago; and

(c) if so, the details of the finding?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The extensive mounds at Nani Rayan, located on the estuary of River Rukmavati, near Mandvi, District Kuchchha, Gujarat, have yielded archaeological material ranging in time from c.3rd cent B.C. to c 7th century A.D. during laying pipeline of the Sardar Sarovar Project. Besides fragments of the Roman amphorae, the site has yielded coins of Mauryan, Kshatrapa, Gupta, Gujarat Sultanate periods in addition to a late Byzantine gold coin and a Ummaiyyad Dinara. The other antiquities include bronzes, terracotta figurines, plaques, beads, gamesmen, shell bangles, sealings and pottery of different cultural periods.

Circumstantial evidence indicates that Nani Rayan could be a riverine port having Indo-Roman trade as well.

General Assembly of World Tourism Organisation

776. PROF M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in October last, 15th session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organisation was held at Beijing;

(b) if so, what are the details of address of our Tourism Minister;

(c) the steps so far taken by Government to improve the conditions of foreign tourists to India; and

(d) what has been the impact of such steps?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.